GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:447
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
ORGANIC FARMING
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Organic farming best hope` appearing in the Tribune dated April 3, 2000;

(b) if so, the facts reported therein; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Union Government to reduce the use of chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides and weedicides and to promote organic farming during this year and coming years?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
(SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA)
(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.
STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.447 TO BE ANSWERED ON TH 26TH APRIL, 2000 IN THE LOK SABHA.
(a) to (c): The attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Organic farming best hope` published in the Tribune dated April 3rd, 2000.

2. The report in the news-item state that the Punjab farmers are using excessive amounts of chemicals which not only increases the cost of production but also poses a threat to the environment and sustainability of production. The article also states that organic farming will be the best hope for Punjab farmers. Use of effective micro organisms (EM) which refers to a mixed microbial culture in liquid form has been reported to be deployed in the countries like Denmark and Japan. The mixed culture of micro organisms is reported to be beneficial for soil fertility and also for quick decomposition of farm residues for preparation of compost. It has been suggested that the Punjab Agriculture University may prepare a project to test the efficacy of this formulation.

3. Average consumption of fertilizer nutrients in India is about 90 kg/ha. which is far below the consumption levels in western countries and is even lower than consumption level in Sri Lanka (112 kg/ha.), Pakistan (123 kg/ha.) and Bangladesh (130 kg/ha.)However, the fertilizer nutrient consumption in Punjab being about 179 kg/ha. is considered reasonably high. The use of high quantities of fertilizers has helped in achieving high levels of crop production in State like Punjab.

4. The Government is taking following steps as regard the use of chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides etc.:-

a) Integrated use of plant nutrients is being promoted to ensure that the use of high amounts of chemical fertilizers alone may not have ill effects on soils. This also ensures the benefits of favourable effects of use of organic manures and bio-fertilizers. Soil test based fertilizer application is also being encouraged to ensure optimum use.
b) The use of crop residues, straws, bio-degradable substances etc. for conversion into compost/manure is being promoted.

c) A scheme on promotion of the Integrated Pest Management is being implemented which encourages the practice of biological pest control in conjunction with chemical pesticides and other non-chemical methods of pest control so as to reduce the consumption of chemical pesticides.

d) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is implementing projects toidentify efficient strains of various types of bacteria which are useful for improving nutrient supply to the crops, which may help in the fast decomposition of crop residues and other bio-degradable substances for production of compost/manure.

5. With a view to give further thrust to the promotion of Organic Farming, the Government has decided to constitute a task force on Organic Farming.